

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CA-01 SCS-06 HA-05 SY-05 USSS-00
AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
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-----090329 222145Z /42
P 222041Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5044

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BUENOS AIRES 2172

E.O. 11652 N/A
TAGS CASC, SHUM, AR
SUBJECT 19 JEHOVAHS WITNESSES FREED WITHOUT CHARGE
PROVINCES EXPEL JEHOVAHS WITNESSES CHILDREN BY DECREE

REF: A BUENOS AIRES 2101 B BUENOS AIRES 1261

1. THE 19 JEHOVAHS WITNESSES PICKED UP IN
A POLICE RAID IN MAR DEL PLATA MARCH 19
HAVE BEEN RELEASED WITHOUT CHARGE, ACCORDING
TO AMERICAN WITNESS REPRESENTATIVE CHARLES
EISENHOWER (SEE REF A).

THE 19 WITNESSES,
INCLUDING SEVERAL CHILDREN, WERE HELD
30 HOURS. THEY APPEARED BEFORE A FEDERAL
JUDGE BUT NO CHARGES WERE MADE AGAINST THEM.

2. IN ANOTHER LESS ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENT,
THE PROVINCE OF BUENOS AIRES HAS ORDERED
ALL PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS TO INSIST THAT
CHILDREN REGISTER AND SALUTE THE FLAG OR
SING THE NATIONAL ANTHEM. ACCORDING TO EISENHOWER, IF A CHILD REFUSES
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TO DO SO, HE IS TO BE EXPELLED FROM PUBLIC SCHOOL. THE
DIRECTIVE, WHICH MENTIONS THE JEHOVAHS WITNESSES BY NAME,
WAS DECREED BY PROVINCIAL EDUCATIONAL AUTHORITIES, IN
FEBRUARY. TEACHERS WHO FAIL TO FOLLOW THE ORDER ARE
SUBJECT TO DISMISSAL.

3. EISENHOWER INFORMED EMBOFF THAT SIMILAR DECREES

HAVE BEEN PASSED IN A NUMBER ARGENTINE PROVINCES AND THAT AT LEAST 100 WITNESSES CHILDREN HAVE BEEN BARRED FROM ATTENDING PUBLIC SCHOOLS. IN SOME CASES, HOWEVER, THE TEACHERS "LOOK THE OTHER WAY", EISENHOWER SAID, AND SIMPLY REPORT THAT NO WITNESSES ARE ENROLLED IN THE SCHOOL. THE DECREE FOLLOWED THE SUPREME COURT DECISION WHICH RULED IN EFFECT THAT WITNESSES CANNOT BE EXPELLED FROM PUBLIC SCHOOL SIMPLY FOR BELONGING TO THE BANNED SECT, BUT LEFT OPEN THE QUESTION OF WHETHER EXPULSION IS PERMITTED IF THE STUDENT CAN BE SHOWN TO HAVE REFUSED TO HONOR NATIONAL SYMBOLS. (SEE REF B).

4. EISENHOWER SAID INDIVIDUAL PARENTS MAY TRY TO TEST THE NEW PROVINCIAL DECREES IN COURT, AN ACTION DENIED TO THE WITNESSES ORGANIZATION AS A WHOLE WHILE IT IS BANNED FROM OPERATING IN ARGENTINA.
CASTRO

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Channel Indicators: n/a
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Concepts: CHILDREN, PRISONERS RELEASE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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Disposition History: n/a
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